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THE CITY OF HARTFORD MAYOR'S
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

**Happy
Holidays!**

MAY YOUR WINTER BE FILLED WITH WONDERFUL MEMORIES!

Holiday Greetings from the Office of Sustainability

Dear friends,

Thank you for making this year a special one! From Hartford's national energy recognition as a city to watch (<https://www.courant.com/news/connecticut/hc-news-hartford-top-city-green-energy-20190729-edcmpdtvljbmv7p5qyfhayr-1-story.html>), to the EID Board's momentum on a community solar installation (<https://www.courant.com/community/hartford/hc-news-hartford-landfill-solar-20190802-ckke3q45vjdahayw2lrmhspfm-story.html>), at the capped landfill, this year has been groundbreaking thanks to each of you.

We saw more than 100 households install solar arrays through the CT Green Bank's Solar for All program, saving hundreds of dollars per year while increasing access to renewable energy for all families. In addition, 175 households added more than 300 rain barrels through our Retain the Rain program (<https://hartfordclimate.org/water/retaintherain/>), capturing water that could otherwise lead to local flooding. Retain the Rain is funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and organized by our very own Grace Yi. Many thanks to our partners at Keney Park Sustainability Project, Our Piece of the Pie, and the MDC, who all played a part in making the program a success.

- **Energy.** Our Department of Energy and Environmental Protection-funded streetlights project led by Walt Veselka, Mike Looney and Frank Dellaripa, created brighter neighborhoods at night, and lower energy use. More interior lighting projects are underway at Department of Public Works, City Hall, SAND School, and the Public Safety Complex, and we anticipate savings to be approximately \$125,000 annually from conservation measures in those four facilities. Hartford's Board of Ed team, with oversight by Claudio Bazzano and Tom Welcome, have done a lot of work to school buildings over the past few years. Beyond capital improvements, financial agreements like demand response and virtual net metering credits are expected to save about \$3.6 Million over the next 20 years.

On Energy Efficiency Day, we hosted our first Eco Expo (<https://hartfordclimate.org/2019/09/24/eco-expo-and-energy-challenge-coming-your-way/#more-3716>), attracting more than 20 local environmental organizations (<https://hartfordclimate.org/eco-expo-and-energy-challenge/>), 75 participants, and two workshops for renters and property owners. Last month, Mayor Bronin announced the City's innovative Energy Equity Challenge (<https://hartfordclimate.org/challenge/>) in partnership with ENERGY STAR, the utilities (Eversource, CNG and UI), local nonprofits and volunteers to ensure that all residents have equal access to ratepayer funds that can improve households. Also in October, we welcomed the CT

Science Center's new Our Changing Earth (<https://ctsciencecenter.org/changing-earth/>). exhibit, with local information on how changing weather will affect us right here in town.

The Energy Improvement District Board, chaired by Sara Bronin, selected a contractor to install additional solar panels at the landfill, which, if all goes well with the state's shared clean energy facilities program design, would help residents purchase fixed-cost green power.

- **Green Jobs.** Local smart building startups Xandar Kardian and BEAD from Upward Hartford are working to lower the cost of cutting edge energy efficiency technology, and they've set up shop here after working in places around the world. BEAD (<https://hartfordclimate.org/2019/11/07/getting-to-know-smart-buildings/#more-3862>) is planning to have 20 – 25 jobs at their new Hartford manufacturing facility for energy efficiency sensors.
- **Food.** In partnership with the Food Policy Commission chaired by Martha Page, our Office moderated a food waste diversion panel for businesses organized by MetroHartford Alliance. We also supported the Commission's interest in residential composting by giving away 60 composters to residents.
- **Data Transparency.** This year, our Office worked with both Google's Geo for Good team and volunteers Bernie Pelletier and Kartik Dubey to establish the City's very first environmental dashboard (<https://insights.sustainability.google/places/ChIJpVER8hFT5okRmVI96ahKjsw>).
- **Community Training and Design Thinking.** We hosted a community service fellow from Harvard's Graduate School of Design, Daniela Teran. Daniela led a bilingual recycling training for our grassroots team at Vecinos Unidos to canvass in Frog Hollow. The training was supported by DEEP. Daniela also helped us create our draft volunteer guide, which was informed by design thinking and principles like empathy.
- **Trees.** Our tree plan was enacted, protecting our 560,000 local trees, more than 22,000 trees and 13,000 future planting locations were mapped by a team led by DPW's City Forester Heather Dionne, and KNOX planted hundreds of trees.

We also worked with the Tree Advisory Commission chaired by Jack Hale, to host a Tree Appreciation event (<https://twitter.com/hartfordclimate/status/1185553361250279425>) to give away 200 trees through our Retain the Rain program. This event featured the support of so many partners and people, including, but certainly not limited to, community organizers Charmaine Craig and Donna Swarr, the Church of the Good Shepherd (our wonderful venue), Riverfront Recapture (our tree transportation elves), and the Hartford Fire Department (our tree watering team). A big thank you to everyone who joined us that day!

- **Pollution Prevention.** This month, a plastic bag ban goes into effect, requiring retailers to stop offering single use plastic bags at checkout. This effort is led by the Mayor's Office, Health and Human Services, Department of Development Services, Management and Budget, and Corporation Counsel. It takes a village to effect change; please help us by spreading the word on the ban.

Finally, we wrapped up the year with a lot of pride, with the big news that our former intern Wawa Gatheru was named UConn's first Rhodes scholar (<https://today.uconn.edu/2019/11/student-leader-wanjiku-wawa-gatheru-named-uconns-first-rhodes-scholar/>).

We should mention that there are MANY unsung heroes working behind the scenes to support residents on a variety of environmental action efforts, and we'd especially like to recognize our Chief of Staff, Thea Montanez and all of our city team members. A big thanks, too, to our funders this year, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, DEEP, and the Funders' Network.

We hope that you and your colleagues, friends and family have a joyful and safe holiday season. Check out the EID Board's Updated Comprehensive Plan (<https://hartfordclimate.files.wordpress.com/2019/11/eid-comprehensive-plan-final-112119-for-website.pdf>) (page 5!) for a sneak peek at the ambitious goals that will frame our efforts in 2020.

With care,

*Shubhada Kambli, Sustainability Coordinator
Mayor's Office of Sustainability*

P.S. Did you know we have a photo recap of 2019? Check it out to see some of the great moments (<https://hartfordclimate.org/2019/11/21/2019photorecap/>), we had with you and all of our community partners.

P.P.S. Our friends from the Transport Hartford Academy (THA) (http://www.ctprf.org/programs_services/transport-hartford/) at the Center for Latino Progress (CLP) shared a wonderful update of transportation progress in Hartford. An abbreviated version is on our blog (<https://hartfordclimate.org/2019/12/24/transportation-progress-2019>); much appreciation for sharing the good news!

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